



Delaware Board of Nursing  
861 Silver Lake Boulevard, Cannon Building, Suite 203  
Dover, DE 19904-2467  
Phone: (302) 744-4500

Office of the Executive Director

Iva Boardman, RN, MSN

#### POSITION STATEMENT: EMPLOYMENT OF NURSING STUDENTS (EXTERNS)

The Delaware Board of Nursing has approved a model for the employment of nursing students (externs) in Delaware. The model is based on the following premises:

- 1.) That students can be employed in an extern role.
- 2.) That the extern role should be defined as someone who assists the licensed nurse in providing care by performing selected health care tasks.
- 3.) That health care tasks are those activities that are routine, repetitive and require no professional judgement.
- 4.) That a licensed nurse cannot delegate those activities that are solely within his/her scope of practice.

A. Purpose To promote the health, safety, and welfare to the public by defining guidelines for the employment of nursing students within the State of Delaware.

- B. Goals
1. To standardize the scope of the extern's responsibilities throughout the state allowing for differing settings and client populations.
  2. To implement a safe and effective nurse extern role to enhance client outcomes while providing the opportunity for nursing students to reinforce their knowledge and skills in the practice of nursing.

C. Criteria

1. Student Eligibility:
  - a.) The extern must be enrolled in a State Board of nursing approved program to prepare candidates for licensure.
  - b.) The extern must have completed sufficient clinical nursing courses to have obtained competency in performing basic health care tasks. (Successful course completion denotes competency.)

2. Extern Responsibilities:

- a.) The extern must adhere to the policies and procedures of the employing agency.
- b.) The extern may not wear school identification.
- c.) the extern may not;
  - 1. Administer intravenous fluids, blood products, perform venipuncture or assume responsibility for the delivery of intravascular therapy in any form.
  - 2. Transcribe physician orders or take verbal or telephone orders from the physician.
  - 3. Assume the role of primary nurse in giving patient care.
  - 4. Direct or supervise any other health care personnel.
  - 5. Make independent decisions regarding a patient's care.
  - 6. Administer medications.
  - 7. Do those activities which are solely within the scope of practice of licensed nursing personnel.

3. Agency responsibilities:

The agency shall:

- a.) Provide orientation to the agency, clinical facilities, and job duties.
- b.) Validate and document that the extern can perform the designated health care tasks.
- c.) Inform the nursing staff about the responsibilities and limitations of the externs and have written policies and procedures.
- d.) Insure that the extern functions under the supervision of a professional nurse.
- e.) Maintain a record of all individuals employed in this category and report these numbers annually to the Board of Nursing.

Approved 04/24/1991